

Message Text

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20

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

OMB-01 SAM-01 /059 W

----- 124717

R 300055Z JUL 75

FM AMCONSUL PORT MORESBY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 721

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

CINCPAC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PORT MORESBY 0731

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PGOV, PINT, PP

SUBJ: GENERAL ELECTIONS DEFERRED UNTIL 1977

REF: PORT MORESBY 0169

1. BACKGROUND: REFTEL REPORTED PASSAGE BACKBENCHER SPONSORED MOTION FEBRUARY 25 TO DELAY 1976 ELECTIONS UNTIL 1977. IMPETUS BEHIND THAT ACTION WAS GENERALLY ACCEPTED BELIEF THAT LARGE NUMBER MHA'S WOULD NOT BE RETURNED TO HOUSE. REFTEL NOTED TOTAL ABSENCE PARTY DISCIPLINE HERE IN FACE OF ISSUES OF PRACTICAL IMPORTANCE SITTING MEMBERS.

2. ON JULY 28 HOUSE (SITTING AS CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY) ONCE AGAIN CONSIDERED ELECTION DATE IN CONJUNCTION WITH CHAPTER 14 OF CONSTITUTION DEALING WITH TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSTITUTION.

3. CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY VOTED 50 TO 29 IN FAVOR DEFERRING NATIONAL ELECTIONS UNTIL MAY OR JUNE 1977. MOVE WAS SUPPORTED BY SEVEN GOVERNMENT MINISTERS, DIRIA (POSTS),
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KAVALI (LANDS), OKUK (TRANSPORT), BELO (WORKS), TAUREKA

(EDUCATION), LUS (POLICE), SASAKILA (CULTURE). COUNTRY
PARTY LEADER GIREGIRE AND A NUMBER OF UNITED PARTY
FRONT BENCHERS ALSO SUPPORTED THE MOVE. CHANGE WAS
JUSTIFIED, AS BEFORE, AS PROMOTING CONTINUITY AND
STABILITY OF GOVERNMENT IN PERIOD FOLLOWING INDEPENDENCE.
A LATER AMENDMENT TO EXTEND ELECTIONS TO 1978 WAS DEFEATED.

COMMENT: POLOFF TOOK BROAD SURVEY OF MHA'S VIEWS DAY FOLLOWING
VOTE. CONSENSUS IS LARGE NUMBER MHA'S DO NOT WISH FACE
CONSTITUENTS AT THIS TIME. THESIS THAT PROLONGING
ELECTIONS UNTIL 1977 WILL PROMOTE GOVT STABILITY IS
DISCREDITED BY FACT CHIEF MINISTER, PROMINENT PANGU AND
PPP MHA'S, LEADER OF OPPOSITION UNITED PARTY TEI ABEL,
AND THOSE NATIONAL PRESSURE GROUP MHA'S PRESENT ALL VOTED
AGAINST AMENDMENT TO EXTEND ELECTIONS.
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Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

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